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SUBJECT: SOUTH AFRICA: DEMARCHE ON RESULTS OF U.S.-RUSSIA
PRESIDENTIAL SUMMIT

REF: STATE 71326

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11. (U) Guidance Request. Please see paragraph four.

11. (SBU) Summary: Acting Pol Counselor delivered reftel demarche to South African Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DICO) Russia and U.S. Desk Officers and repeated key points in a subsequent meeting with the outgoing and incoming DICO Directors for Nuclear Nonproliferation and Disarmament. The South African officials were cautiously optimistic that the recent U.S.-Russia Summit may also signal a more productive climate for multilateral disarmament and nonproliferation discussions. DICO regional officials gave us a heads up that South African President Jacob Zuma is planning a visit to Moscow. DICO nonproliferation colleagues asked for guidance on U.S. verification policy. End summary.

12. (SBU) On July 20, Acting POL Counselor met with DICO Russia Desk Officer Simon Cardy and U.S. Desk Officer Fransie Cooper to discuss reftel demarche points. The DICO officials said President Jacob Zuma is planning a trip to Moscow in the near future (no date given). Asked for reactions to the Summit, Cardy said that for South Africa, President Obama's visit to Russia was seen as welcome change in tone from a period in U.S.-Russia relations that South Africa considered overly confrontational. Cardy welcomed the U.S.-Russia agreement to reduce nuclear stockpiles and resume START negotiations as a sign that there is commitment on both sides to move forward on international security issues. Reaffirming South Africa's commitment to multilateral mechanisms, Cardy said it was too soon to tell whether the new spirit of U.S.-Russia cooperation on nonproliferation would have an impact on Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) and other multilateral talks.

14. (SBU) In a July 23 farewell meeting with outgoing DICO Deputy Director for Nuclear Nonproliferation and Disarmament Michiel Combrink and his replacement Johann Kellerman, POL again raised reftel points. Combrink and Kellerman welcomed progress on U.S.-Russia arms reduction, but they echoed the skepticism of their DICO colleagues that such progress would necessarily translate into forward movement on multilateral mechanisms, including the NPT. Combrink said he understood that there may be a review underway of U.S. policy on verification and he asked for an update. Action request: Post would be grateful for guidance to share with South African officials on the latest thinking on verification policy.
CONNERS